



Informing food policy: Balancing the evidence

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Abstract:

The paper considers some of the reasons why governments develop food policies, gives examples of what is in food policies at the Scottish and UK levels and explores ways of effectively providing balanced evidence for policy development. It discusses the challenges of exchanging knowledge between the science and policy communities, given their different languages and cultures, highlighting the need for greater mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities. It draws on experience in the Scottish Government of developing the government's 'Recipe for Success - Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy' through engagement with stakeholders, scientists and analysts and touches on the more complex nature of the Department for International Development's contribution to meeting the first Millennium Development Goal. It compares the need for collation and analysis of existing evidence during the development of policy, with the desirability of providing policy direction for longer-term strategic research and the challenges of connecting the policy expectations with researchable questions. The paper concludes by emphasising the need to focus research in the short-term on mitigation of climate change through decreasing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of food, while also taking an account of economic, health and broader environmental sustainability objectives. A further challenge is to communicate complexity and uncertainty in ways which enable decision-makers from the consumer to policy-makers to make informed choices. Longer-term research needs to focus on the opportunities and risks associated with adapting to climate change.

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Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Food/Water Security, Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Non-United States

Non-United States: Europe

European Region/Country: European Country

Other European Country : United Kingdom

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified